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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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3/9/72

Central Intelligence Agency
Foreign Affairs
Director

Eyes Only Meeting

3-15-72
JJS

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

SUBJECT: Intention of Kurdish Leader Al-Barzani to Approach the United States Government for Assistance; Iranian Intelligence Request for Expression of United States Government Willingness to Overthrow the Ba'thi Regime of Iraq

POL 23-9
POL 13-3

1. In early March 1972 a reliable Agency source reported that Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani, leader of the Iraqi Kurds, was under considerable pressure from the Soviet Union to effect a rapprochement with the Ba'thi regime in Baghdad. Together with this effort, the Soviet Union is also exerting pressure upon the Ba'th Party of Iraq and the Communist Party of Iraq to resolve their differences and work together toward a national front government. As a result of this pressure, al-Barzani believes that both the Iraqi Kurdish movement as well as the Iraqi nation are in danger since he will have to acquiesce unless he receives help from outside Iraq. Consequently, al-Barzani is again planning to send an emissary to persuade the United States Government of his concern and to arrange travel to the United States for al-Barzani to plead his case personally. Al-Barzani has indicated that he will not sign any agreement with the Ba'th Party of Iraq until he has reassessed the position of the United States toward his cause. (The last meeting between the United States Government and an emissary from al-Barzani took place in Beirut in early November 1971, and was reported in confidential Beirut Embtel 9689, 3 November 1971.)

2. On 6 March 1972, a senior official of the Iranian National Intelligence and Security Organization (SAVAK) contacted [redacted] to advise that SAVAK believes that Iraq is falling increasingly under Soviet domination. The SAVAK official cited Soviet pressures on al-Barzani and the imminence of a Soviet-Iraqi treaty. The SAVAK official stated that these factors presage further Soviet inroads into Iraq with consequent difficulties for Iran and for the Persian Gulf. The SAVAK official concluded by

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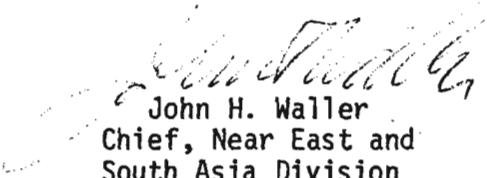
POL 13-3
POL 23-9

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asking for the latest United States position on the question of attempting to replace the Iraqi Ba'thist government. The SAVAK official also wished to know if the United States would be prepared to provide financial and military support for the attempt and assist in drawing together Iraqi exiles who would comprise the nucleus of a separatist government initially harbored by al-Barzani. Our representative replied that he would inform his headquarters of SAVAK's queries.


John H. Waller
Chief, Near East and
South Asia Division

cc: Director of Intelligence and Research

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